

Regarding this feature, the Office Action states "it is the examiner's position that the plurality of rollers in Koyama et al. are mounted to rotate freely on independent shafts where each parallel row of rollers rotate independently of the other rows, therefore; it may be construed that at least part of the rollers rotate independently from each other as claimed because they are mounted on independent shafts." See Office Action at page 3.

However, the Office Action does not provide any reason or rationale explaining why the Examiner believes that the parallel row of rollers in Koyama rotate independently of the other rows, nor does the Office Action cite any portion of Koyama to support this assertion. Accordingly, the §102 rejection should be withdrawn because Koyama fails to disclose that at least part of the rollers rotate independently from each other, as required in claim 1. See MPEP §2131 ("TO ANTICIPATE A CLAIM, THE REFERENCE MUST TEACH EVERY ELEMENT OF THE CLAIM").

Additionally, Applicants have obtained a partial translation (paragraph [0035]) of Koyama, which is attached hereto for the Examiner's review. As stated therein (referring to Fig. 7), "the main rollers 12 are driven by the same drive motor for driving the discharge roller 9, which allows the recording paper P to be stably conveyed while a constant distance with the ink head 8 is held ... therefore, the rotation of the conveying rollers 12 are driven by the drive for the discharge roller 9 as a reference, so that the recording sheet P can be stably conveyed."

Thus, it is apparent from Koyama that the conveying rollers 12 are driven by the same drive motor, which is not suggestive of independent rotation. Additionally, Koyama does not suggest independent rotation because it indicates that the paper P should be stably conveyed by using the same motor to drive conveyor rollers 12 and discharge roller 9. Independent rotation of the conveying rollers 12 may interfere with the stable conveyance of the recording

sheet P in the embodiment described in Koyama. Thus, for at least this reason, Koyama fails to disclose or suggest the features of independent claim 1.

Independent claim 44 recites similar features to independent claim 1, and is therefore also patentable over Koyama for the reasons discussed above. Additionally, independent claim 44 also recites "a suction opening which is defined between adjacent lines on the surface of the platen and communicates with the suction device."

Independent claim 44 was newly added in Applicants' September 26, 2007 Amendment. However, the Office Action fails to separately discuss independent claim 44, and additionally fails to explain how Koyama discloses "a suction opening which is defined between adjacent lines on the surface of the platen." Accordingly, the §102(b) rejection of claim 44 is improper because the suction opening feature defined in claim 44 has not been addressed by the Examiner. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 22, 23, 27, 30, 35 and 45 depend from one of independent claims 1 and 44, and are therefore also patentable over Koyama for at least the reasons enumerated above, as well as for the additional features they recite.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1 and 3-45 are earnestly solicited.